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Duchess of Cambridge expecting a baby



The Duchess of Cambridge is pregnant. The most eagerly awaited pregnancy was announced today by St. James Palace on behalf of Kate and her husband Prince William.
(see story on page 7)

!NOW OPEN!

KFC @ Palm Beach



KFC *sogood*

Aruba Beach Club members get help from Princess Cruises to continue their recycling and fundraising efforts

For 15 years, Aruba Beach Club Pool Towel Station Employee, Fabiana Maduro and her colleagues have been the center of pop-tab collection efforts, the proceeds of which are donated to the Ronald McDonald House Centers. These tabs have been transported over the years by Aruba Beach Club members, Dr. Lorraine Gutowicz-Weinberger and other ABC members, on their return to the USA.

The Ronald McDonald House program provides a "home-away-from-home" for families that have traveled far to obtain treatment for children with life-threatening diseases or conditions. The houses allow the families to stay close by their hospitalized child at little or no cost. Their houses are built on the simple idea that "nothing else should matter when a family is focused on healing their child – not where they can afford to stay, where they will get their next meal or where they will lay their head at night to rest. The Ronald McDonald House believes that when a child is hospitalized the love and support of family is as powerful as the strongest medicine prescribed."

The efforts of the ABC members have grown to the point that this year, they now



Pop tabs

have over a million pop-tabs collected to donate, which presented something of a problem regarding transport. Tightening of airline security measures has also resulted in it being too restrictive for the Aruba Beach Club Members to carry the pop-tabs on return flights to the USA. Recently, Richard (Rick) Titone, who resides in Florida and is a dedicated board member, decided to look for an alternative method. Rick contacted Donna Silvera Barnett, Port Operations/Logistics Specialist of Princess Cruises. Donna listened carefully to his

plea and decided to accept the challenge of transporting the shipment to their home port in Fort Lauderdale. The Ft. Lauderdale Ronald McDonald House will be the recipient of this year's donation.

Donna then presented Giovanni Raghunath of the Armada Port Agency Services on Aruba with the project, he enthusiastically accepted the challenge of preparation and coordination efforts for the delivery of the pop-tabs, to be pick-up by the Island Princess docked in Aruba on December 7th.

Continued on page 2

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Aruba Beach Club members get help . . .

Continued from page 1



When Princess Cruise Lines learned of this fundraising project, they also initiated a pop-tab collection program. They will add the results of their efforts to the Aruba Beach Club's donation. The Ronald McDonald House will send the tabs to an aluminum recycling plant, which presents them with a check for the weight of the tabs. Most of the centers accommodate more than a thousand families annually who have traveled from far to be with their children during treatment at specialized hospitals, and in eight years, tab collection has resulted in nearly \$110,000 dollars for the Ronald McDonald House in Philadelphia.

The Aruba Beach Club would especially like to thank Donna Silvera Barnett and Princess Cruises, Giovanni Ragunath, Susy Maduro of Maxor Sea Freight NV for preparing the export documents, the Aruba Ports Authority, captain and crew of the Island Princess, Fabiana Maduro, Dr. Lorraine Gutowicz-Weinberger and Rick Titone for assisting in this continuing to assist a worthwhile foundation. A special thanks to members and guests of the Aruba Beach Club, some of which have even brought tabs collected at home to be added to those collected by the ABC.

Rosalie Klein

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Wednesday Balloon Raffle \$500,- Cool Casino - LADIES NIGHT
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Saturday Balloon Raffle \$500,- Earn Triple POINTS all day 10 am-6 pm



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Registration closes for Calypso and Carnival Bands and Road March

ORANJESTAD -- The MUSICA Organization, which is actively involved in Carnival preparations and the grand festival of Calypso and Road March, dubbed, "Aruba Caiso & Soca Monarch 2013," is inviting all managers and band leaders who have not yet registered their groups at MUSICA in Dakota Shopping Paradise, to register as soon as possible.

They must go to Inky Richardson who is in charge of the registrations. There is the opportunity to register until December 11th and up to 6:00 pm when registration closes. Registration of participants and singers will take place on Sunday, January 6th 2013. The last day to submit lyrics is January 14th, 2013, at 6:00 pm. The pre-final of the festival will be on January 15, 16 and 17, while the Grand Finale will be Saturday, January 19th, 2013.

The goal of MUSICA is to convert the CAISO & Soca

Monarch Festival into a platform to expose and eventually export Aruba's music and her unique styles of Calypso and Soca in all the different variations on the global market. The Aruban Carnival culture is such that it can be promoted and commercialized internationally as a unique product.

The organization has chosen to use the musical terms that is most actual internationally, that is, Caiso and Soca. Caiso is synonymous with Calypso and is a term being used throughout the Caribbean for this musical genre. There will be no philosophical change whatsoever with respect to the musical style and/or the lyrical content that each band desires to present. And, participation in the festival will register no distinction of race, color, sex, etc. Soca, on the other hand, is the correct and official term for the musical genre we know on Aruba for our Road March

Soca is a variety of different

styles and each band has their own unique manner of presenting it. This genre, just like music in general is in constant evolution. The winning prizes for this year's festival will be fabulous. MUSICA will also introduce a special prize for the popular "Road Jam," which will be chosen by a panel of judges. On the final night of the parades they will reward the "Road march Champion" with the most popular song. They will also crown the Caiso (Calypso) Monarch and the Soca Monarch.

Registration forms can be downloaded from: <http://www.mediafire.com/?5a5lh0tdg39f6> or from MUSICA's facebook page on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/MusicaAruba.

Download, fill out the form and submit to Inky Richardson at MyUSA in Dakota Shopping Paradise before December 11th. Register and participate to win the biggest prize in the history of our festival.

Digicel supports Foundation BOB Aruba

The Digicel Company is known to support different important organizations in our community. This time they have chosen to support Fundacion BOB Aruba (Peoples' Research Project for Breast Cancer) with a cellular for their communication with the community.

Fundacion BOB is a new foundation, which was officially launched on October 12th, 2012. Their primary objective is to do necessary investigative work in the community with respect to breast cancer, which is one of the diseases appearing in large numbers on the island. In Aruba, we are registering 80 new cases every year. What is very alarming is that the cases are occurring among women in the age bracket of 45 to 65 years of age.

The foundations' goal is to,



in a structured manner; examine women between 45 to 75 years every two years through the use of a Mammogram.

For this reason, Digicel felt the urge to assist the foundation, offering them a free cellular which they can use to contact the clients and that they can have an email and

data 24 hours a day without any monthly expense.

Digicel reminds all women on the island that the only way to combat breast cancer is to do early detection which will help save lives and heartaches. In this manner Digicel is contributing to a very worthy cause.



Tuesday

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Sports Centers to receive sizeable utility reduction



Last Friday, the government met with representatives of ELMAR at the YMCA in San Nicolas to share with 7 sports facilities in San Nicolas the news of a very interesting decision. The government shared with the group that they reached a protocol in which their sports facilities would receive a 50% reduction in electrical consumption on the first 1000KWh used. This is in addition to the general reduction recently implemented in the month of August during the Social Dialogue for the entire island.

A representative of the Centro di Barrio Brazil explained

that they are very happy with the reduction, because every month they exceed 200KWh. This means that their electric bills are around Afl.1400, and sometimes even more. He continued to say that these reductions will mean a great deal to them. It will be a heavy burden lifted from the organization.

The organizations in San Nicolas who signed the protocol are: Centro di Barrio Brazil, Madushi Stars Ballpark, BMX Streetwise Complex, Centro di Barrio Lago Heights, YMCA San Nicolas, Village Basketball Court, and the board of SFAMT (Fundacion Piscina Olimpico Roly Bislick.

Toys for Smiles at Christmas



The organizing "Toys for Smiles at Christmas" is collecting toys from anyone and everyone willing to participate deliver to children at Casa Cuna and Imeldahof on December 24th.

The toys can be new or lightly used and should be

dropped off with wrapping material. This way the organizers can have control over the age groups of the toys. The drop off address is Koyari # 21, Noord.

The donation days confirmed so far are Casa Cuna on December 27, YMCA on December 20, and Imeldahof

has yet to be confirmed.

Toys 4 Smiles is a charitable foundation out of Las Vegas. Its mission is to provide a toy for children of all ages in need of a smile.

Photo above shows some of the helpers of 'Toys for Smiles' in Miami.

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Aruba Bank's Good 4 the Neighborhood 2012 come to an ebullient end at Paseo Herencia



Colegio San Antonio



Lasalle College Team



Maria College



Colegio Arubano Oranjestad

Colegio Arubano San Nicolas—Nos Luga di Topa (the place they like to hang out)

Maria Collage Mavo-RCA Sport Field and Community Center

Colegio St. Augustin—Mabon

Colegio San Antonio-Ayo Rock Formations

La Salle Colegio-Madiki

Top three projects were selected by a jury comprised of Erin Croes, Rocila Acosta, Susanne Croes, Natalie Wolff, Lionel Croes, Jurgen Benschop and Marlon Pieters. Their decision was based on creativity, clarity and effectiveness. Prizes are in the form of rewards to the schools. The winners are:

3rd Place: Colegio St. Augustin—2500 Aruban Florins (\$1,428.)

2nd Place: La Salle Colegio—5000 Aruban Florins (\$2,857.)

First Prize: Colegio San Antonio "We Love Ayo" 7500 Aruban Florins (\$4,285.)

Aside from the top three winners, all participating schools will receive a prize of the use of a container from SERLIMAR to clean up their school as well as a "Movie Night" at The Cinemas in Paseo Herencia Shopping Mall for all the Class 3 students participating in the project.

The "Good4TheNeighborhood: Upgrade Your Barrio" was highly successful in engag-



Colegio Arubano San Nicolas



Filomena College



St. Augustin College

Aruba Bank conducted their 3rd annual Good 4 the Neighborhood campaign over the past two months, ending with a resounding celebration of island youth at the Paseo Herencia Mall in Palm Beach on Friday evening, November 30.

The awareness raising program encourages middle and upper school students to take an interest in their community and find rewards in volunteer work. Each year it invites students from various schools to form teams and design a project that will improve their neighborhood and enhance the quality of life for the community.

This year, Aruba Bank

teamed with SERLIMAR, the island's official waste disposal service, in providing the student teams the means to clean up various public areas. The students were then charged with finding sponsors for materials to refresh and refurbish worn facilities such as sport halls and playgrounds.

Teams from seven schools presented the results of their "Good4TheNeighborhood: Upgrade Your Barrio" projects. The participating schools and the areas they selected were:

Colegio Arubano Oranjestad—Centro di Barrio Dakota

Filomena College Mavo-Yara Center in Savaneta

ing not only schools and students, but communities and residents in a program that establishes good neighbor habits. A general cleaning day was conducted at various barrios on November 28. The enthusiastic participation was so encouraging, that Aruba's Min-

ister of Justice and Education, Arthur Dowers, declared all students "winners" and announced an annual event modeled after this year's Good4theNeighborhood project will become an integrated part of the school programs.

Rosalie Klein

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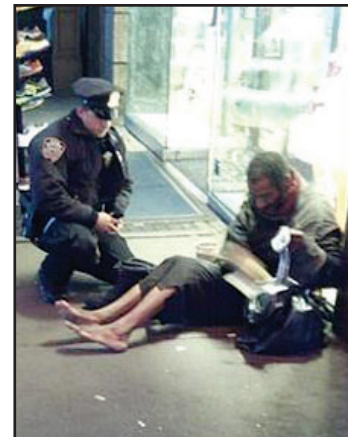
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Despite gift, US beggar prefers the shoeless life



NEW YORK (AFP) - A New York police officer rocketed to overnight fame when a tourist filmed him giving new boots to a homeless man, and posted the video online. But when a reporter caught up with the beggar, the man was shoeless again.

What happened?

"Those shoes are hidden. They are worth a lot of money," the homeless man, identified as Jeffrey Hillman, 54, told The New York Times. "I could lose my life."

Hillman, who first arrived to New York 10 years ago, said he was surprised by all of the attention.

"I was put on YouTube, I was put on everything without permission. What do I get?" he asked. "This went around the world, and I want a piece of the pie."

A photo taken by a tourist of Hillman and the police officer, 25 year-old Lawrence DePrimo, that was posted on the police department's Facebook page has received more than 600,000 "likes."

"I appreciate what the officer did, don't get me wrong," Hillman told The Times. "I wish there were more people like him in the world."

Hillman clearly prefers the unshod life: since he has been in the news a woman has come forward to say she bought him a pair of shoes a year ago.

Nevertheless, DePrimo's gesture of kindness has inspired many people.

"That's actually the real meaning of Christmas. Sharing your gifts with someone who is really in need. Not just exchanging expensive gifts with each other," commented one Shabana Joseph on the police department's Facebook page.

US Republicans make 'fiscal cliff' counter-offer

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Republicans yesterday laid out a proposal for closing the huge US deficit that raises half the income proposed by President Barack Obama and opposes a higher tax rate increase for the rich.

Their \$2.2 trillion deficit reduction proposal agreed to the permanent extension of tax cuts, a move that would mitigate much of the impact of the looming fiscal cliff. But they did not immediately address Obama's call to modify or delay the drastic "sequester"

spending cuts slated to begin on January 1 that could sharply slow growth.

Instead they proposed slashing \$1.2 trillion from federal spending over 10 years, including \$600 billion from Medicare, which covers health insurance for the elderly.

In a letter to Obama, top Republicans assailed his focus on raising government income by \$1.6 trillion rather than spending cuts to right the deficit as "neither balanced nor realistic." And they rejected Obama's insistence on extend-

ing the tax cuts only for middle class households, while raising rates for the wealthy.

"The proposal also includes four times as much tax revenue as spending cuts, in stark contrast to the 'balanced approach' on which you campaigned," they said.

The Republicans countered with \$800 billion in tax increases through "pro-growth tax reform" that lowers tax rates but boosts income by closing loopholes and special deductions for companies and households.

And against Obama's \$600 billion in spending cuts, the Republicans proposed a \$1.2 trillion package based on a plan first introduced a year ago that was rejected in Congress.

"This is by no means an adequate long-term solution, as resolving our long-term fiscal crisis will require fundamental entitlement reform," the letter said. But it called the Republican proposal "fair middle ground that allows us to avert the fiscal cliff without hurting our economy and destroying jobs."

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

LA mayor warns over week-old US trade hub strike

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - A strike disrupting cargo through a key US trade gateway with Asia is about to enter its second week, with no progress reported in negotiations, and warnings about the economic fallout.

Los Angeles mayor Antonio Villaraigosa has called for round-the-clock bargaining to end the strike at the ports of Los Angeles and nearby Longbeach, where strike action began last Tuesday.

"This cannot continue," Villaraigosa said in a message to union leader John Fageaux Jr. and employers' chief negotiator Stephen L. Berry, warning that the labor dispute is "costing our local economy billions of dollars."

The action by clerical staff started at a terminal in Los Angeles port last Tuesday but spread to six other terminals and Long Beach on Wednesday.

The two ports average \$1 billion of cargo each day, a huge proportion of it shipments to and from Pacific nations.

The striking workers claim that the Harbor Employers Association wants to outsource jobs, but employers' spokesman Berry said the strike was over "demands that we hire people they don't need."

The National Retail Federation (NRF) noted that a 10-day lockout of West Coast ports in 2002 took six months to recover from and cost the economy an estimated \$1 billion a day.

"An extended strike... could have a greater impact considering the fragile state of the US economy," it said last week, calling for President Barack Obama to intervene to resolve the dispute.

"The two sides must remain at the negotiating table until a deal is reached," it added.

EU reduces Syria delegation over security fears

BRUSSELS (AFP) - The European Union has decided to reduce its Syrian delegation because of security fears, the spokesman for the bloc's diplomatic chief said yesterday, amid new fears chemical weapons could be used in the ongoing conflict.

"The EU delegation has decided to reduce activities in Damascus to a minimum level due to the current security conditions," spokesman Michael Mann said in a statement, after the United Nations announced it was indefinitely suspending

operations in Syria and withdrawing non-essential staff.

The UN reduction coincided with the United States voicing concerns that Assad's forces might be weighing the use of chemical weapons.

Syria has begun mixing chemicals that can be used to make deadly sarin gas, a US official told AFP yesterday, amid fears that President Bashar al-Assad's forces could attack rebels with chemical weapons.

"We've picked up several indications which lead us to believe that they're combining chemical precursors," the official said, on condition of

anonymity, adding that the operation was apparently aimed at making sarin.

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton warned yesterday their deployment would cross a "red line."

"We are concerned that an increasingly beleaguered regime ... may be considering the use of chemical weapons against the Syrian people," White House spokesman Jay Carney added.

In televised remarks, a Syrian foreign ministry official said Syria would "never, under any circumstances, use chemical weapons against its own people, if such weapons exist."

Brazil architect Niemeyer not improving



RIO DE JANEIRO (AFP) - Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer was in stable condition yesterday, one month after the 104-year-old was hospitalized in Rio for kidney failure, his doctor said.

A statement from Samaritano hospital signed by his doctor Fernando Gjorup said Niemeyer was "lucid and continues to receive physiotherapy in the coronary unit", but there was no sign of significant improvement.

he architect, who will turn 105 on December 15, was hospitalized on November 2 suffering from dehydration after coming down with the flu, the latest in a series of lengthening hospital stays.

Israel revives plan for 1,600 settler homes in E. Jerusalem

JERUSALEM (AFP) - Israel has revived a plan to construct 1,600 new settler homes in the east Jerusalem neighbourhood of Ramat Shlomo that raised US objections when it was first announced in 2010, an official said yesterday.

"In the next two weeks the interior ministry's district committee for Jerusalem will convene to discuss the objections to the program that was approved for deposit over two years ago," interior ministry spokeswoman Efrat Orbach said. "The committee will then have to decide which of the objections -- if any -- it accepts, and make changes accordingly."

The Ramat Shlomo project

caused a diplomatic rift between Israel and Washington when it was first announced in March 2010 but it has lain dormant since August 2011.

It was initially announced on March 9, 2010, as US Vice President Joe Biden met top Israeli officials in Jerusalem to boost Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

Yesterday's announcement comes after the United States and European nations expressed their discontent to Israel over its decision to plan 3,000 more settler homes in the West Bank and east Jerusalem after the Palestinians won upgraded status at the United Nations.



U.S. Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) (R) greets people with disabilities during a news conference on Capitol Hill December 3, 2012 in Washington, DC. Sen. McCain joined Senate Foreign Relations Chairman John Kerry (D-MA) in urging fellow Senators to approve the "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities bill, an international agreement for protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities. (AFP PHOTO)

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Obamas congratulate British royals on pregnancy

WASHINGTON (AFP) - US President Barack Obama yesterday sent his congratulations to Britain's Prince William and his wife Catherine on the news they were expecting a baby and a future heir to the throne.

"On behalf of everyone here in the White House, beginning

with the president and the first lady, we extend our congratulations to the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge on the welcome news this morning out of London that they are expecting their first child," White House spokesman Jay Carney said.

The Obamas met the royal

couple, who were then newly weds, during a state visit to Britain last year.

"I know they both feel that having a child is one of the most wonderful parts of their lives, so I'm sure that will be the same for the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge," Carney said.

Washington renews call for Cuba to release US prisoner

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The United States yesterday called on Havana to release American Alan Gross, as the State Department contractor marked his third year in a Cuban prison for distributing laptops and satellite phones.

Gross, 63, was arrested on December 3, 2009 and later sentenced to 15 years "for simply facilitating communications between Cuba's Jewish community and the rest of the world," said State Department spokesman Mark Toner.

Cuba "should release Alan Gross and return him to his family, where he belongs," said Toner, decrying Gross's "unjustified imprisonment."

Washington wants Cuba to at least allow Gross to travel to the United States to visit his 90-year-old mother, Evelyn Gross, "who is gravely ill. This

is a humanitarian issue," Toner said.

Toner also said that Gross has lost more than 100 pounds since his arrest, and suffers "from severe degenerative arthritis that affects his mobility, and other health problems."

Cuba said Wednesday that Gross is in "normal" health, and medical tests show he does not have cancer as his family feared. The weight loss was due to voluntary exercise and a balanced diet that "has allowed him to get rid of his formerly obese condition," the Cuban report said.

Washington and Gross's wife Judith, however, want a doctor of their choosing to examine the prisoner.

President Barack Obama "has followed Mr. Gross's case with concern, and he urges Mr

Gross's release," said White House spokesman Jay Carney.

"We continue to press the Cuban government to release him," said Carney. "This is a humanitarian issue."

Judith Gross has been critical of Washington's efforts to win her husband's release, calling it "totally negligent."

At the same time, she said, "I'm very angry at the Cubans for arresting him and sending him to jail. It's all about teaching the United States a lesson."

Washington and Havana, former Cold War foes, have been at odds for over half a century and lack full diplomatic relations.

Cuba has made it clear that it is ready to negotiate Gross's release in exchange for the release of five captured Cuban spies held in the United States.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Nobel laureate calls on US to join landmine treaty

GENEVA (AFP) - Nobel Peace laureate Jody Williams called on the United States yesterday to join the 160 nations that have ratified a global pact banning landmines, leaving other powers such as China and Russia out in the cold.

"We're hoping that the United States will finally put in writing what it has done in fact," said Williams, who shared the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize with the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), which oversees implementation of the Ottawa Convention.

"The US has not used their mines since (the 1991 Gulf War), we haven't exported since 1992, we haven't produced since the mid-1990s,

and we have destroyed millions in the stockpile," Williams, an American citizen, told reporters in Geneva. "So the question is, if you're doing it all already, why not sign?"

Her comments came as representatives of around 100 governments, including the United States and other countries that have yet to ratify the 1997 treaty, gathered in the Swiss city along with activists and aid workers to evaluate what progress has been made in the past 15 years.

The United States, which is one of only 36 UN countries that have not ratified the 1997 Ottawa Convention, has voiced fears in the past its national defence and other security commitments could suffer if it joined.

Britain's Kate and Prince William expecting a baby



LONDON (AFP) - Prince William's wife Catherine is pregnant with their first child, St James's Palace said yesterday, in an eagerly awaited announcement about a baby destined to be Britain's future king or queen.

The former Kate Middleton is in hospital suffering from severe morning sickness, the palace added in a statement which ended months of fevered speculation about whether she was expecting a baby.

Queen Elizabeth II and the rest of the royal family are "delighted" by the news, as are the Middletons, it said.

"Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge are very pleased to announce that The Duchess of Cambridge is expecting a baby," St James's Palace said in a statement.

The palace refused to say exactly when the couple became aware she was expecting a baby, saying that it was only "recently".

But Britain's Press Associa-

tion news agency reported that the pregnancy has not passed the 12-week point, the traditional time for making a pregnancy public, and the announcement was prompted by Kate's medical condition.

It defined the condition as "very acute morning sickness, which requires supplementary hydration and nutrients".

The baby would be third in line to the throne after Charles and William, irrespective of whether it is a girl or a boy following a change of the rules of succession last year.

Speculation about a royal pregnancy intensified last week when the couple were given a baby's romper suit during their first visit together to Cambridge, the historic English university city which is home to their dukedom.

William laughed and said "I'll keep that" after accepting the tiny hand-stitched outfit with the words "Daddy's little co-pilot", a reference to his job as a Royal Air Force search and rescue helicopter pilot.

(see photo above)

Health & Living

Most Canadians, Americans want pot legalized: poll



OTTAWA (AFP) - A majority of Americans and Canadians want marijuana legalized, saying cannabis should be readily available for those who want to use it, according to a survey released.

The Angus Reid online survey of 2,007 people in the two countries found that 57 percent of Canadians and 54 percent of Americans support the legalization of pot.

The bulk of that support

comes from 18-to-34 year olds in the United States (65 percent) and those aged 35-to-54 in Canada (61 percent).

Furthermore two-thirds of Canadians and Americans expect their respective governments to end marijuana prohibition within a decade.

Earlier this month Colorado became the first US state to approve a proposal to legalize marijuana, including for recreational use. Washington fol-

lowed suit while Oregon rejected a similar proposal.

Canada and a number of US states have legalized the use of marijuana for medicinal purposes.

The public opinion poll has a 3.1 percent margin of error.

Supreme Court defers action on same-sex marriage

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The US Supreme Court put off a decision on whether to take up the sensitive issue of same-sex marriage, taking no action Monday on 10 gay marriage petitions before it.

The top US court had been expected to take up the gay marriage challenges at its private conference on Friday, but as of Monday it had not added any of those cases to its docket.

The court released a long list of cases that it will not hear, but made no mention of the gay marriage petitions, suggesting the justices needed more time to discuss it at their next conference December 7.

Eight of the gay marriage petitions involve challenges to the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), a 1996 law that denies federal benefits to married same-sex couples.

The benefits enjoyed by heterosexual married couples but denied to gays include inheritance rights, tax breaks, filing of joint income tax returns, and health insurance coverage.

Two other petitions deal with an Arizona state law similar to DOMA and a challenge to a 2008 California voter initiative that limited marriage to a man and a woman.

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg has said that same-sex marriage probably would come before the court in the session that ends in mid-2013.

If the court does take up one or more of the petitions it will probably hear oral arguments on the constitutionality of same-sex marriage in March and then hand down their ruling in June.

Thousands of homosexual couples have already been legally married or will be soon in nine of the 50 US states plus the District of Columbia.

Aquino wants end to Philippine birth control debate

MANILA (AFP) - Philippine President Benigno Aquino today called on legislators to finally vote on a controversial birth control bill after months of debate over what is a highly divisive issue in the conservative country.

The bill would pave the way for the introduction of sex education in schools and the provision of free contraceptives, but has polarised the largely Catholic nation of 100 million people.

Women's groups as well as the United Nations have been pushing for the law to be passed, saying it would help to bring down poverty as well as the Philippines' high rate of deaths in childbirth.

However, the measure is opposed by the politically influential Catholic church, which is against the use of contraceptives, including condoms and birth control pills.

Aquino is calling for a vote on the bill in the lower house this week so that it can go to the senate before either being signed into law or vetoed by the president.

Valte said the president himself was for "responsible parenthood" but he would leave it to the legislators to vote on the measure based on their conscience.

HIV cases reaching 'epidemic' scale in Greece

ATHENS (AFP) - HIV infection among crisis-hit Greece's drug users is reaching "epidemic" proportions with recorded cases marking a 35-fold increase from 2010, health experts warned.

A Greek study found 487 HIV-positive cases among intravenous drug users in the first ten months of the year compared with 206 in 2011 and 10 to 14 in 2010, a trend blamed on the country's two-year economic crisis.

The outbreak is currently limited to Athens, where an estimated 3,000 people inject drugs, they said.

The study presented also found that 19 percent of Greek drug users and 24 percent of migrant users were HIV-positive.

Over 30 percent of homeless people in the past year were also positive.

Greece has drastically cut its health budget and social support programmes amid a broader scale-back of public expenses over the last two years, a policy designed to reduce the country's debt and secure EU-IMF bailout loans.



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Monday - Sunday

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MINSK, Belarus (AFP) : A child affected by Down Syndrome takes part in a dolphin therapy session at the cultural and health center Nemo in the Belarus capital Minsk, on December 3. Dolphin Assisted Therapy (DAT) is a relatively new treatment that is becoming popular for children with learning disabilities, such as autism, Down syndrome and attention deficit disorder, as well as patients with epilepsy, cancer and depression.

How much sleep do children need?

--By the age of two, most children have spent more time asleep than awake and overall, a child will spend 40 percent of his or her childhood asleep. You know your child needs less sleep now than he did when he was a baby, but how much less is still enough? Every child is different -- some need more sleep and some less -- but here are general guidelines for how many hours of sleep a child needs on average each day.

- 2 years: 10 to 12 hrs (@ night) 1 to 3 hrs (1 nap) 13 hours
- 3 and 4 yrs: 9 to 12 hours -1 to 3 hrs - 12 to 13 hours
- 5 yrs: 8 to 11 hrs - 0 to 2.5 hours - 10 to 11 hours
- 6 years and older: 10 to 11 hours - none -10 to 11 hours
Keep in mind that most kids need a lot of sleep -- usually more than parents allow for.

Sleep problems and disorders are prevalent at this age. Poor or inadequate sleep can lead to mood swings, behavioral problems such as hyperactivity and cognitive problems that impact on their ability to learn in school.



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Sci-Tech

Top UN court to hear Peru-Chile maritime dispute



THE HAGUE (AFP) - The UN's International Court of Justice began hearings yesterday in a long-running maritime border dispute between Peru and Chile whose outcome could have repercussions in the region.

Peru first applied in January 2008 for recognition of its rights to a 38,000 square kilometre (15,000 square mile) triangle of the Pacific Ocean currently under the control of Chile, in a move that has caused tensions between the two neighbours.

Peru says the maritime borders are unclear and accuses Chile of appropriating its territory.

The 15 judges at the court, which rules on disputes between nations and whose decisions cannot be appealed, are to hold hearings until December 14, with a ruling not expected before mid-2013 at the earliest.

Peru is set to open its oral arguments and Chile is to respond starting today.

Bolivia has also said it will send a delegation to the court in The Hague and plans its own lawsuit to try to reclaim its ocean access from Chile.

The two countries have historically had strained relations stemming from the border dispute, which dates from Chile's defeat of Peru in the late 19th century War of the Pacific.

Chile also defeated Bolivia in the 1879-1883 war over territory rich in sodium nitrate, in high demand in Europe at the time for use as a fertiliser.

Bolivia lost its seaport Antofagasta, while Peru lost its southernmost provinces, including Arica, now in far northern Chile.

Peruvian President Ollanta Humala has urged both nations to treat the lawsuit, the decision and future compliance from both countries "as the end

point of a dispute between brother countries".

Peru is also claiming another 27,000 square kilometres of water that is considered as high seas governed by neither country.

Chile says the maritime border was settled by treaties in 1952 and 1954 -- treaties that Peru argues were to regulate fishing, not demarcate the border.

The ICJ last month issued a ruling that redrew Colombia's maritime boundary to favour Nicaragua, prompting Bogota to say it no longer recognises the court's jurisdiction.

Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos said the country's territorial and marine boundaries should be established through treaties, and not in verdicts handed down by the court.

Apple will sell the iPhone 5 in more than 100 countries by end of December



-- The company sold more than five million units during the device's first three days of availability, setting a new opening-weekend sales record. Apple today announced iPhone 5 will be available in South Korea on Friday, December 7, with more than 50 additional countries being added in December, including Brazil, Russia and Taiwan. iPhone 5 is the thinnest and lightest iPhone ever, completely redesigned to feature a stunning new 4-inch Retina display; an Apple-designed A6 chip for blazing fast performance; and ultrafast wireless--all while delivering even better battery life.

iPhone 5 is currently avail-


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FRUTIGEN, Switzerland (AFP) Picture taken in November shows cans filled up with caviar at Tropicana Frutigen, a company using geothermal energy from the Loetschberg rail tunnel to produce exotic fruit, sturgeon meat and caviar, in the Alpine village of Frutigen. Around 35,000 greyish black Siberian sturgeon bask in 2,700 cubic metres (95,350 cubic feet) of pools filled with naturally heated Alpine spring water. This year, the company will produce up to 800 kilos (1,763 pounds) of caviar, selling on average at 3,000 Swiss francs (\$3,232, 2,492 euros) a kilo, but it ultimately aims to have 60,000 sturgeon and an annual production of three tonnes of the black gold



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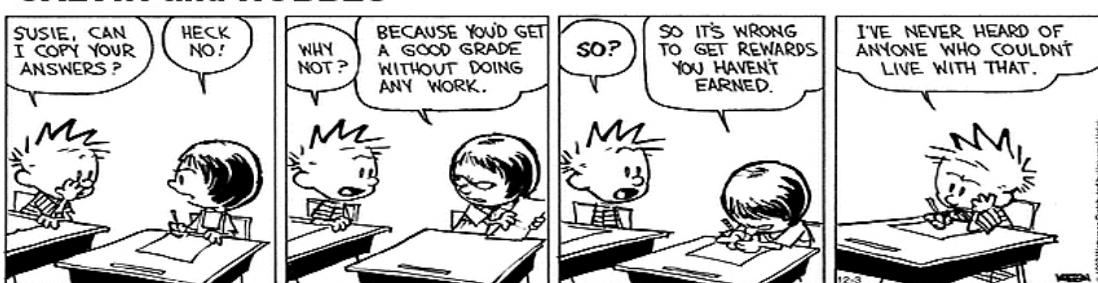
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ACROSS

1. Expert aviator
4. "___ Freedom Ring"
7. The "A" of SALT
11. Stupor
13. Granada gold
14. Part of a "Cats" costume
15. Slicker
17. Louise of "Gilligan's Island"
18. Celebrates
19. Parlor instrument
21. Payable
22. Prehistoric
23. Tips to one side
27. Does KP work
30. "Surfin' ___"
31. USAF team
33. Eggs
34. "One True ___" (Meryl Streep film)
37. Got the patient ready for surgery
40. Born: Fr.
41. Talent for music
42. Did archaeological grunt work
45. Enjoys a reverie
49. Blind as ___

50. What you should save for
52. Lunar trench
53. "A Bug's Life" bug
54. Aries or Leo, e.g.
55. Elba, e.g.
56. "Papa ___ a Rollin' Stone"
57. Inadvertent drip-catcher

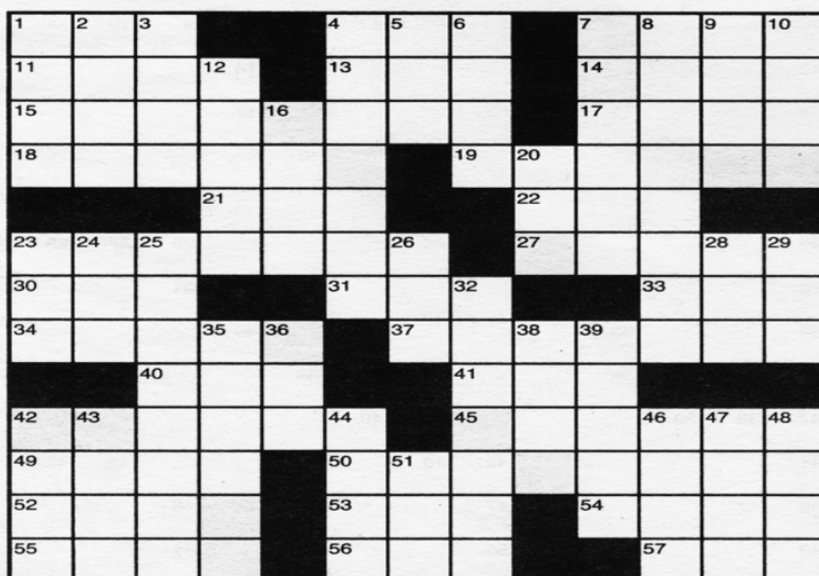
DOWN

1. Lot measure
2. Wheedle
3. Exude
4. Adjusts, as one's belt after a feast

5. Historic age
6. Kids
7. Hun leader
8. Unit of precipitation
9. Prospector's milieu
10. Stave
12. Negative post, on a battery
16. Piece of proof
20. Explosive sound
23. Ditch class
24. Gray shade
25. Something a meteorologist measures
26. Syrup start
28. Twilight time
29. Melancholy

TEEMING UP

32. They roll after the movie
35. Provoke
36. Mild exclamation
38. Come by honestly
39. ___ on (victimizes)
42. Colorful Indian dress
43. Nile bird
44. "High Noon" word
46. Mine entrance
47. Crèche figures
48. "Auld Lang ___"
51. Literary olio



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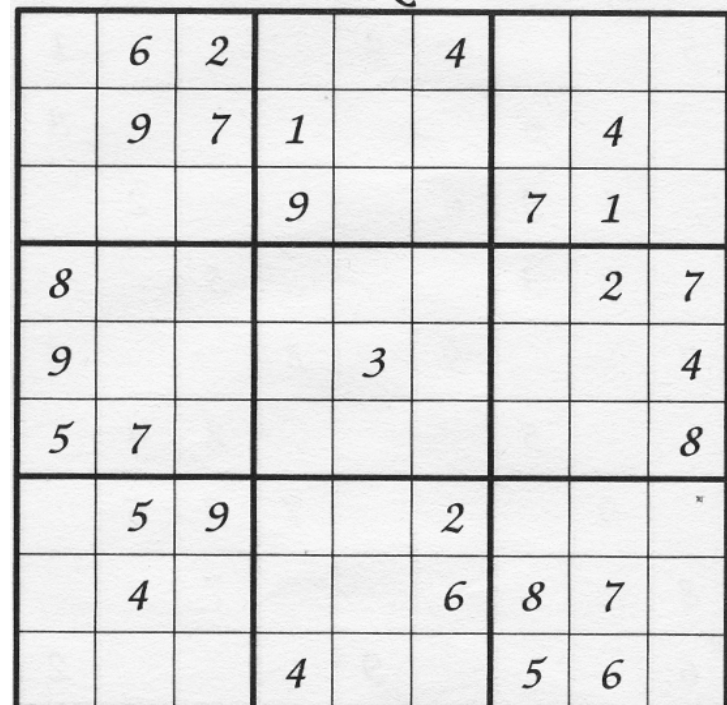
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Sudoku



SOLUTION

2	9	5	6	1	7	8	3	4
6	4	8	9	5	3	1	7	2
1	3	7	2	8	6	5	9	4
8	6	9	1	7	2	3	4	5
4	5	1	3	8	9	7	6	2
7	2	3	5	6	9	7	1	8
9	1	4	3	7	6	5	8	2
5	7	2	8	9	1	4	6	3
3	8	6	4	2	5	7	9	1

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9
A number is Never repeated in a row or column.
In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9



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Finance

SEC charges top accounting firms over China data

WASHINGTON (AFP) - US market regulators yesterday charged the China affiliates of five top accounting firms with violation of securities laws for refusing to provide audit data related to China-based companies.

"The audit materials are being sought as part of SEC investigations into potential wrongdoing by nine China-based companies whose securities are publicly traded in the US," the Securities and Exchange Commission said.

The five firms charged were BDO China Dahua, Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Certified Public Accountants, Ernst & Young Hua Ming, KPMG Huazhen, and PricewaterhouseCoopers Zhong Tian.

The SEC said they violated the Securities Exchange Act and the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, which requires foreign public accounting firms to provide the SEC upon request with audit work papers involving any company trading on US markets.

SEC investigators have been trying to obtain the data for months from the audit firms but they have refused to cooperate, it said in a statement.

"Only with access to work papers of foreign public accounting firms can the SEC

test the quality of the underlying audits and protect investors from the dangers of accounting fraud," said Robert Khuzami, director of the SEC's Division of Enforcement.

"Firms that conduct audits knowing they cannot comply with laws requiring access to these work papers face serious sanctions."

Britain clamps down on 'tax dodgers'



LONDON (AFP) - Britain yesterday announced a campaign against "tax dodgers" and "cowboy advisers" to claw back £2 billion a year, as law-

Report: Adelson spent \$150 million on US elections

WASHINGTON (AFP) - US casino magnate Sheldon Adelson spent \$150 million, much more than previously thought, on funding Republican hopefuls in an unsuccessful bid to stop Barack Obama winning a second term, a report said yesterday.

Adelson, 79, whose Las Vegas Sands Corp. also operates casino resorts in the Chinese territory of Macau, the world's largest gambling center, funded several Republican candidates and affiliated groups during the campaign.

His apparent aim was to unseat Obama and help Republican lawmakers take back control of Congress after the November 6 elections, but his spending failed with Obama defeating Mitt Romney and the Democrats retaining the Senate.

The \$150 million figure -- given by the Huffington Post, citing Republican fundraisers -- is three times more than the \$54 million previously disclosed, and 50 percent more than the \$100 million Adelson once said he was prepared to spend.

The money bankrolled groups ostensibly working against Obama and in support of Republican presidential nominee Romney and other candidates who ran for Congress against members of the Democratic Party.

Adelson, whose fortune is estimated at \$20 billion by Forbes magazine, is being investigated by the US Justice Department over how his casino network is operated.

Last week, his company reportedly approved a special dividend of \$1.2 billion for Adelson and his wife -- they own around 52 percent of Las Vegas Sands Corp. -- in advance of an expected federal tax hike.

The two fundraisers quoted

by the Huffington Post said Adelson shelled out between \$30 million and \$40 million to Crossroads GPS, a campaign group run by Karl Rove, former Republican president George W. Bush's top political aide.

While US law places limits on the amounts that can be given directly to political candidates, a Supreme Court ruling in 2010 allows corporations, unions and individuals to make unlimited donations to arms-length groups.

The Citizens United ruling led to the creation of super-PACS (political action committees), such as GPS, that spent millions of dollars on campaigning though it was not officially endorsed by a specific candidate.

Ikea founder determined to keep company private

LAUSANNE (AFP) - Ikea founder Ingvar Kamprad is determined to keep the Swedish furniture giant off the stock exchange, he told AFP ahead of the inauguration yesterday of a fellowship in honour of his late wife.

Kamprad, 86, told AFP in an email he had "always believed that keeping Ikea in private hands would give ... more flexibility to develop successfully, allowing a longer-term perspective on business development."

Kamprad, who founded the unlisted, family-owned company in 1943, no longer gives

interviews and did not speak at the event, but did answer a few questions electronically.

"Staying private has been one of the key reasons for Ikea's tremendous success," he insisted.

The world's largest furniture retailer said last August that its trademark was worth 9.0 billion euros.

The company, which only releases annual earnings reports, posted a 10.3-percent hike in net profit in 2011 to nearly 3.0 billion euros on global sales of nearly 25 billion euros.

New York doormen swamped by online holiday sales



NEW YORK - Record-breaking online sales this holiday shopping season are sending an avalanche of packages to New York City, where apartment building doormen are working hard to keep smiling amid the deluge.

With the arrival of the boxes coinciding with the year-end tipping season, that

good cheer can translate into welcome cash.

This year's early holiday buying frenzy started with a bang as shoppers rang up nearly 17 percent more online sales on so-called Black Friday, compared with last year, and 30 percent more on so-called Cyber Monday, the biggest internet purchasing day in history.

MONDAY'S Crossword Answer

T	E	R	N	F	O	R	S	L	A	P
A	M	I	E	E	R	E	H	I	R	E
J	U	G	G	L	E	R	S	I	O	T
		A	I	D	T	A	N	N	E	R
C	R	E	T	E			W	E	T	
R	O	L	E	S	O	D	A	A	C	T
O	D	E		D	E	L	A	Y	M	O
P	E	P		I	T	E	M	B	E	R
	H	E	N				L	O	R	D
B	L	A	D	E	S	G	E	M		
R	I	N	G		A	C	R	O	B	A
A	N	T	E		L	O	O	E	L	I
T	E	S	S		T	O	W	R	E	A



Current as of: 12/03/2012	Currency Code	Buying rate banknotes	Buying Cheques	Selling Rate
U.S.A.	USD	1.77	1.78	1.80
Dutch Antilles	ANG	98.00	100.09	100.20
Canada	CAD	1.77	1.79	1.81
Britain	GBP	2.80	2.85	2.91
Switzerland	CHF	192.25	192.97	193.77
Netherlands	EUR	230.45	232.55	234.89
Sweden	SEK	25.88	26.60	27.40
Denmark	DKK	30.21	30.93	31.73
Norway	NOK	30.68	31.40	32.20
Japan (per 10,000)	JPY	214.65	216.61	218.79

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Pope joins Twitter with @pontifex handle



VATICAN CITY (AFP) - Pope Benedict XVI is joining Twitter promising "pearls of wisdom" in eight languages under the handle @pontifex, the Vatican announced on Monday.

Papally-approved tweets will begin next week just in time for Christmas celebrations, as the Catholic Church tries to reach a wider audience and harness social media to woo the Internet generation.

"The first tweets will be answers to questions sent to the pope on matters of faith. The public can start sending them now," Greg Burke, a senior communications adviser to the Vatican, told a packed press conference.

The account carries a picture of the pope waving and its followers rose from around 2,400 at the time of the announcement to more than 24,000 just an hour later -- still only a tiny fraction of the world's 1.1 billion Catholics.

An introductory message on the account based in "Vatican City" read: "Welcome to the official Twitter page of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI."

"Pontifex" is a Latin word meaning "pontiff", the pope's official title.

Benedict will only follow his own account in other languages for the moment and there are no plans for a Facebook account yet, Burke said, adding: "Twitter can be more effective than Facebook in passing on the Pope's message."

The tweets will be in Arabic, English, French, German, Italian, Polish, Portuguese and Spanish and more languages could be added in future.

Several fake Twitter accounts already set up in the pope's name have been used to mock the 85-year-old pontiff, but the Vatican said it was not worried about the risk that hostile messages would be tweeted on the real account.

Battling HIV, Mexican women reclaim sexuality in photo shoot

MEXICO CITY (AFP) - Rocio Ramirez poses for a portrait with a colorful Mexican shawl covering one side of her near naked body, revealing her erotic side to prove that HIV has not robbed her sexuality and self-esteem.

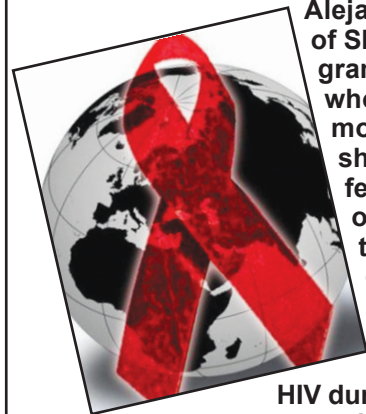
Smiling with straight black hair for another shot, as part of a photographic workshop to show that women with HIV/AIDS can still feel beautiful despite the virus and the side effects of their treatment.

Ramirez said she decided to bare almost all during the event titled "On eroticism, and a bit more" in order to "reduce the discrimination against women who live with HIV."

The aim of the pictures, which will be displayed at the National Human Rights Commission, is to build up the self-esteem of women whose stories are "always a bit of tragedy," said



Alejandrina Garcia, coordinator of SIPAM's Women and HIV program. Most Mexican women who have HIV are monogamous married housewives, she said. They are often infected by their husbands and only find out that they have the virus when the man or one of their children become sick or die of AIDS, Garcia said. Sometimes they learn that they have



HIV during pregnancy. Roselia Vargas, a 57-year-old grandmother, discovered she had HIV in 1998 when her husband was tested after falling seriously ill. More than 147,000 Mexicans were HIV-positive last year and another 9,600 people are expected to contract the virus this year, according to the National Center for the Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS. Mexican men account for 75 percent of HIV cases.

Ecuador's Correa to get press freedom award in Argentina

QUITO (AFP) - President Rafael Correa, who has been criticized by journalism groups for clamping down on media rights in Ecuador, travels to Argentina Monday to receive a press freedom award.

The journalism department at the National University of La Plata said it chose the leftist leader because they consider him a salient figure "in the battle against the hegemonic will" of privately-owned news media.

Past award winners include Bolivia's Evo Morales and Venezuela's Hugo Chavez, two other leftist leaders also accused by rights groups of limiting press freedoms.

In July 2011 an Ecuadoran court sent four journalists from the daily El Universo to prison and imposed a \$40 million fine for "defamatory libel" for running opinion articles criticizing Correa.

The ruling unleashed a storm of protests by rights groups and media watchdogs, with Human Rights Watch Americas director Jose Miguel Vivanco denouncing what he called a "major setback for free speech in Ecuador."

Correa later pardoned the journalists, but is still battling some media groups that he says are attempting to destabilize his government.

Ecuador has also granted asylum to WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, who has been holed up at its London embassy since June in a bid to avoid extradition to Sweden where he is wanted on sex crime allegations.

Eat like a local at The Queen's restaurant at Palm Beach Plaza



Varella, Luisa and the next generation of chef



Keshi Yena with plantains, vegetables and pica

An elegant décor with a breezy terrace overlooking Palm Beach welcomes guests to Varella Innocencia's very popular restaurant showcasing authentic local cuisine:

The Queen's.

They may have moved from Oranjestad to hipper new digs in Palm Beach Plaza, but the food and prices are strictly native, which is what first won this charming eatery their loyal clientele. Varella's mom, Luisa, is still in the kitchen, conjuring up the delicious dishes that have been in her family for generations, acknowledged on the menu with items such as "Carni Stoba di Mamachi" - "Grandma's Beef Stew," and their Arawak Steak, along with local delicacies like Keshi Yena - "Full Cheese." This is a tasty, filling stew of chicken, with other ingredients that are handy that day, all incased in a thick skin of melted Gouda. It was very satisfying and particularly memorable paired with The Queen's garlic bread and very special Pica, a mix of chopped onions and the famous local hot pepper, Madame Janette. Not overly spicy, it lends that perfect bit of tang to this deliciously picturesque meal.

One of the distinctions of Aruban cuisine is incorporating unique indigenous ingredients such as in Wild Cucumber Stew and a particular light fish chowder accompanied by the local specialties pan bati (corn meal pancake) and funchi (the local version of polenta.)

Seafood main courses for Catch of the Day Aruban Style to shrimp and a mixed seafood platter with shrimp, fish, squid, scallops and mussels. Meat dishes such as BBQ Chicken and Ribs or Grilled Tenderloin, each including a choice of 2 side dishes; all quite yummy and bargain-priced to boot!

The Queen's is located on the second level of Palm Beach Plaza, tucked into a cozy corner at the front of the mall. If you have a mind to try the real deal in Aruban food, without a doubt, this is the way to truly eat like a local. They are open from 11:00 AM to 11:00 PM, daily, offering indoor and outdoor dining. Aside from an extensive menu they also have daily specials made from whatever is in season and Mama Luisa is in the mood to prepare, so don't forget to ask about what isn't on the menu!

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5 Burgers Aruba: Now your best breakfast bargain!



A favorite stop for a great burger for lunch or dinner has just expanded their hours and menu to offer some of the best breakfast bargains to be found in Palm Beach. Owners Aaron and Rosie Walisever are living their dream: a home on paradise while welcoming all and sundry to their proud undertaking, 5 Burgers Aruba. The couple's fanatical dedication to giving their customers what they really want has resulted in a unique menu from an inter-

nationally known franchise with a "5", which now includes breakfast.

"You never get a second chance to make a first impression," believes Aaron. Upon entering 5 Burgers Aruba in The Village Mall in Palm Beach, one is struck by utterly spotless surroundings and a smiling, friendly, attentive service crew. Of course, the main item on the menu is burgers-the way they were meant to be, thick and juicy,

made fresh daily and 100% pure beef, the kind that made the hamburger a traditional American treat.

However, beginning at 7 a.m., patrons can now order 2 eggs any style, (omelets with 3 fillings are \$7.99) toast and coffee with unlimited refills for the special introductory price of only \$3.99, (\$4.49 with bacon) or All-you-can-eat pancakes, for \$6.99, again, with free refills on fresh coffee. Breakfast is served until 11 a.m. Famous for their fries made from fresh potatoes, Aaron has been working for months on devising the most irresistible home fries recipe, chunky and tender with skins still on; after much testing and tasting, he got the thumbs up from his harshest critic, Rosie; so this is another treat you have to try.

A glance at their burger menu will certainly tempt you to return for lunch or dinner, to sample their famous specialty items such as the Gouda, Farmer's or Man Burger (al-



most 12 ounces of choice beef), and a Western Burger with Aarons' secret-recipe crispy onion rings. All of these can be personalized with an incredible array of toppings, (mushrooms, jala-peño peppers, bacon, cheese, lettuce, tomato... whatever, the list goes on) at absolutely no extra cost.

5 Burger portions are ENORMOUS! Aaron suggests that even their small serving of fries is enough to be shared by

two. He was very amused to watch a famous French chef demonstrating the best way to make fried potatoes on a gourmet cooking show and could only comment "He stole my recipe!"

Try them the English way-with vinegar, and you'll wonder how you ever ate fries without it. This same 5-star chef also swears by Gouda as the best topping for the ideal gourmet cheeseburger.

5 Burgers is now open early until 10-ish at night; delivery is available to both the high-rise and low-rise hotel and beach district at now extra cost for orders over \$50. Enjoy a great lunch without ever leaving the beach by calling 586-3904. However, we suggest you stop by and enjoy their authentic, heartfelt hospitality; it is not unusual for either owner to sit and chat, sharing their knowledge of the island while making sure patrons are happy with their meal.

SPORTS

Sports: India awaits Olympic ban verdict



NEW DELHI (AFP) - India's sports chiefs began last-ditch efforts yesterday to prevent the country from being suspended from the Olympic movement, but stuck to their stand of electing tainted officials.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) executive board, which meets in Lausanne on December 4 and 5, will decide if India should be suspended for flouting the Olympic charter in its election process.

The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) had been directed by a Delhi court to hold elections according to the government's sports code, while the IOC wanted it to abide by the Olympic charter that favours autonomy.

Elections to the faction-ridden IOA are due to be held on December 5, but have become a formality after a rival group led by IOC member Randhir Singh withdrew from the contest last month.

It left tainted sports official Lalit Bhanot elected unopposed as the IOA's secretary-general, while Haryana state politician Abhey Singh Chautala was set to take over as president.

Bhanot is out on bail after being held in custody for 11 months last year over corruption charges during the 2010 Commonwealth Games in New Delhi when he was secretary-general of the organising committee.

The IOC Ethics Commission had in October warned the Indian body against fielding either Bhanot or former IOA chief Suresh Kalmadi -- who is also on bail over corruption charges.

Chautala, known to be a close associate of Kalmadi, said there was nothing wrong in Bhanot contesting elections since he had not been convicted.

Chautala said two IOA members had been deputed to meet IOC officials in Lausanne ahead of the possible vote against India at the Executive Board meeting.

Suspension from IOC mem-

bership would mean India would not receive IOC funding and its officials would be banned from attending Olympic meetings and events.

India's athletes would also be barred from competing in the Olympics under the national flag, although the IOC could allow some to take part under the Olympic flag.

India's lone individual Olympic gold-medallist Abhinav Bindra said seeing Bhanot elected as the IOA secretary-general made his "blood boil".

But he added: "If our Olympic association is banned, it could be a blessing in disguise. With no multi-sport event in 2013, Indian athletes could... unite to change the present system."

Clean Sports India (CSI), a body of former sportspersons seeking a corruption-free sports administration, also supported the IOC's stand.

Football: Chivas dispense with Cruyff's services

MEXICO CITY (AFP) - Mexican club Chivas have ended their association with Johan Cruyff, they said in a statement, citing a disappointing run of form, including the failure to qualify for the Concacaf Champions League this season.

The former Barcelona manager had been acting as a consultant to the Guadalajara club since February on a two-year contract and will leave at the end of December, according to a Chivas statement released on Sunday.

Chivas officials said he had "not achieved the objective set" for Mexico's most successful and popular side, which has won the first division a record 11 times but has had a lean spell over the last decade, winning just one title.

The club said Cruyff's management team, including coach John van't Schip, would remain.

UEFA bans Maltese player for life



LAUSANNE (AFP) - Maltese footballer Kevin Sammut has been given a life ban for trying to throw a game against Norway, European football's governing body UEFA said Monday, citing a ruling from one of its disciplinary tribunals.

The judgment bans the 31-year-old player from "football-related activity for life for breaching UEFA's principles of integrity and sportsmanship", the organisation said in an online statement.

The decision on appeal, which only covers football activities in Europe, went much further than a lower tribunal ruling in August that barred Sammut from the sport for 10 years.

Both the player and UEFA's disciplinary director had appealed against the original ruling, the statement said.

The match under investigation was a UEFA European Championship Group C qualifier in Oslo in June 2007, which Norway won 4-0. The sport's world governing body, FIFA, is expected to consider extending the decision to a global ban, the UEFA statement said, adding that an appeal could be lodged against Monday's decision by the Court of Arbitration for Sport. UEFA's appeals body meanwhile upheld the lower tribunal's ruling that there was not enough evidence against two other Maltese players, Kenneth Scicluna and Stephen Wellman, to take disciplinary action, the statement said.

Dutch linesman clinically dead after post-match beating

The Hague (AFP) - A 41-year-old football linesman was pronounced clinically dead on Monday after he was severely beaten by teenaged players following a match in the Netherlands, police said.

Police have arrested three 15- and 16-year-olds from visiting Amsterdam club Nieuwe Sloten for allegedly beating the linesman shortly after the final whistle in Sunday's match against Buitenboys in neighbouring city Almere.

Dutch media said the linesman had been repeatedly insulted during the match.

During the post-match beating he was kicked in the head and taken to hospital later in the evening after feeling unwell, police said.

Police arrested the three youths from Amsterdam at

their homes on Sunday night. They have been kicked out of their club and their team has withdrawn from this season's championship.

Sports Minister Edith Schippers reacted with shock even before the clinical death was announced.

"It's absolutely horrible that something like this can happen on Dutch sports grounds," she said. "This no longer has anything to do with sport and is completely unacceptable," she told Dutch public television.

"Statistics show that most incidents that happen in youth football happen with this age group. Obviously it's a difficult age during which certain players can be reckless," national news agency ANP quoted the KNVB as saying.

Football: Sneijder contract talks break down as exit looms

ROME (AFP) - Dutch international Wesley Sneijder moved closer to a winter departure from Serie A giants Inter Milan after his ongoing contract negotiations broke down on Monday.

Coach Andrea Stramaccioni left him out of his squad for the 1-0 win over Palermo having indicated on Saturday, three days after the Italian club were accused of blackmailing the player, Sneijder would be available for selection only to leave the Dutchman out of his matchday squad.

Stramaccioni defended his decision and said he had not been influenced by club president Massimo Moratti.

Last week Inter announced that 28-year-old Sneijder would not play for the club again until he agreed to new terms.

Moratti also waded into the dispute and put the pressure firmly on the 2010 World Cup finalist to make up his mind.

Inter are reportedly asking the player to accept a reduction in salary which is estimated at 6 million euros a year and extend his contract by one year to 2016 without a change in total salary for the deal.

That announcement angered the professional footballers' trade union, FIFPro, which said it would be appealing to UEFA and FIFA.

In an article headlined 'FIFPro wants to end blackmail behaviour of clubs', FIFPro claimed: "Inter has demanded that the Dutch international extend his contract until 2016, but then for exactly the same total salary."

"In other words, to work a year longer without receiving any salary for it."

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NBA : Magic knock off Lakers

--The NBA had an eventful weekend to start December, and it was punctuated on Sunday night by a victory by the Orlando Magic over the Los Angeles Lakers. Not only did Orlando (6-10) topple the Lakers and ex-teammate Dwight Howard, but they did so convincingly, 113-103. Magic guard Arron Afflalo, an L.A. native, scored 30 points as the team shot an even 50 percent from the field and made 19-20 from the free throw line.

Elsewhere around the league, Saturday night featured a marquee game in each conference. The Miami Heat (12-3) defeated the Brooklyn Nets (11-5) at home by the score of 102-89 in a game in which

Dwyane Wade looked like the player that fans are used to seeing, scoring over 30 points for the first time this season. Out west, the San Antonio Spurs (14-4) scored a 99-95 overtime victory over the Memphis Grizzlies (12-3) on the road.

Friday night featured a host of cross-conference matchups, but the week's marquee game saw the Lakers blow out the Denver Nuggets (8-9) 122-103 at home. The most exciting finish, though, happened in the ATL, where the Cleveland Cavaliers (4-13) defeated the Atlanta Hawks (9-5) 113-111 thanks to a last-second tip-in by Alonzo Gee.



LeBron James is Sports Illustrated's 2012 Sportsman of the Year



-- James won essentially all he could win in 2012: He became an NBA champion for the first time, won the NBA Finals MVP trophy, helped the U.S. win Olympic gold for the second time and picked up his third NBA MVP award. The last NBA player to get the nod was James' Miami Heat teammate, Dwyane Wade, in 2006. LeBron James has been involved in sports for 20 years and he can add this award to his long list.

Golf: McDowell wins World Challenge

THOUSAND OAKS, California (AFP) - Northern Ireland's Graeme McDowell ended a two-year victory drought Sunday with a three-shot triumph in the World Challenge hosted by Tiger Woods. McDowell, who capped a stellar 2010 season that saw him win the US Open with a victory in this unofficial post-season invitational, hadn't won anywhere in the world



since then. He carded a four-under par 68 in the final round for a 72-hole total of 17-under 271 and a three-stroke victory over Keegan Bradley. Bradley, the 2011 PGA Championship winner who started the day two shots off McDowell's lead, posted a 69 for 274. After taking the 54-hole lead on Saturday, McDowell admitted that even though this tournament isn't part of any tour, it would be nice to grab a win to cap a mixed season in which he settled for a tie for second at the US Open, and a tie for fifth at the British Open. Bo Van Pelt carded a 70 for sole possession of third place on 278, while tournament host Woods carded a one-under 71 on the rain-soaked Sherwood Country Club course for a share of fourth place on 279. He was joined by Jim Furyk (70) and Rickie Fowler (69).

NBA: Spurs fined for resting stars



NEW YORK (AFP) - NBA commissioner David Stern slapped the San Antonio Spurs with a \$250,000 fine after the club rested a number of their top players in a game against the Miami Heat on Thursday. Stern ruled that coach Gregg Popovich's decision not to have Tim Duncan, Tony Parker, Manu Ginobili and Danny Green make the trip to Florida was in violation of league policy against resting players "in a manner contrary to the best interests of the NBA." The Spurs said they needed a rest because they were playing for the fourth time in five days in the finale of a six-game, nine-day road trip. Despite being without four of its top five scorers, San Antonio's motley crew of bench warmers led 92-85 against the defending NBA champion Heat with under five minutes to go before Miami woke up to win 105-100.

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NFL: Patriots, Broncos clinch division titles



Ryan Tannehill #17 of the Miami Dolphins dives for a touchdown

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - The New England Patriots and Denver Broncos clinched American Football Conference division titles with victories over teams from Florida on Sunday.

The Patriots defeated mistake-prone Miami 23-16 to claim the AFC East while the Broncos took their winning streak to seven and claimed the NFC South with a 31-23 win over Tampa Bay.

Quarterback Tom Brady went 24-of-40 for 238 yards with one touchdown pass to Wes Welker and an interception as the Patriots capitalized on a number of miscues by the Dolphins at Sun Life Stadium.

Belichick earned his 201st career victory which ties him for seventh on the all-time coaching list with Dan Reeves.

Stevan Ridley rushed for a touchdown and Welker finished with 103 yards on 12 catches for New England which clinched the division title for the 10th time in 12 years. Welker tied Jerry Rice's NFL record for most games with 10-plus catches at 17.

Rookie quarterback Ryan Tannehill completed 13-of-29 passes and finished with 186 yards for Miami.

New England's offence had a rare off night in southern Florida as they had averaged

44 points per game in their last four victories in Miami.

The Patriots recorded just two first downs in the third quarter before finally finding their form late in the third.

Brady set the tone in the fourth by hooking up with receiver Aaron Hernandez for a 31-yard pass.

Peyton Manning had three touchdown passes for the Broncos who beat the Buccaneers and clinched their division title for the second consecutive year and 12th in franchise history.

Manning went 27-for-38 with 242 yards and an interception and moved past Dan Marino into second place all-

time for completions with 4,986 to his name.

Demaryius Thomas finished with eight catches for 99 yards and two touchdowns, while Knowshon Moreno had 69 yards on 20 carries and added four catches for 14 yards for Denver.

Quarterback Josh Freeman went 18-for-39 with 242 yards, two touchdowns and an interception for the Buccaneers who have lost two straight. Mike Williams and Dallas Clark each caught a touchdown pass in the loss.

The loss by Tampa Bay allowed Atlanta to clinch the NFC South. The Falcons had defeated the New Orleans Saints on Thursday night.

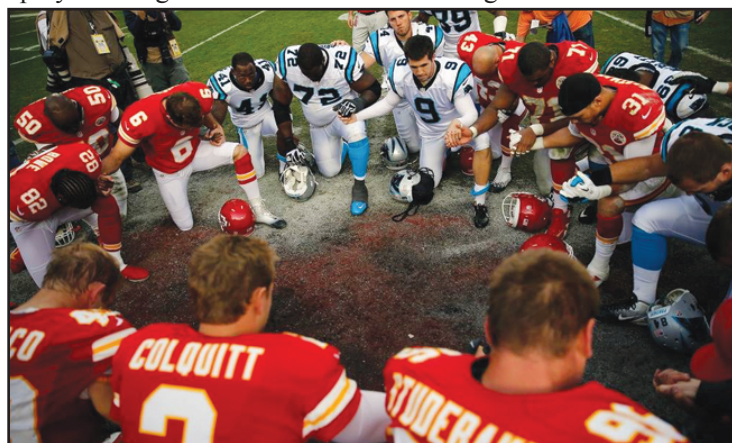
In Detroit, Andrew Luck and Donnie Avery combined on a 14-yard score on the final play of the game as the Indi-

anapolis Colts stunned the Detroit Lions 35-33.

Aaron Rodgers threw for 286 yards and a touchdown and the Green Bay Packers scored 13 unanswered points in the second half to rally for a 23-14 win over the Minnesota Vikings at Lambeau Field.

In the night game, Tony Romo threw three touchdown passes as the Dallas Cowboys defeated Philadelphia 38-33, handing the Eagles their eighth straight loss.

In other games Sunday it was Kansas City 27 Carolina 21; Seattle 23 Chicago 17 (OT); St. Louis 16 San Francisco 13 (OT); Houston 24 Tennessee 10; N.Y. Jets 7 Arizona 6; Buffalo 34 Jacksonville 18; Cleveland 20 Oakland 17; Cincinnati 20 San Diego 13; Pittsburgh 23 Baltimore 20.



Players huddle in prayer following the Kansas City Chiefs 27-21 victory over the Carolina Panthers at Arrowhead Stadium on Sunday, in Kansas City. One day earlier, Chiefs LB Javon Belcher killed his girlfriend, Kasandra Perkins, and then himself.